

Proclamation 4413

January 21, 1976

National Day of Prayer for Americans Missing in Action in Southeast Asia

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Three years have passed since the signing of the Paris Agreement ending United States combat involvement in the Vietnam War.

That agreement contained specific provisions for the accounting of combatants designated as missing in action, and for the return of the remains of American war dead.

Despite this long passage of time, and despite the fact the war is now over, a satisfactory accounting still has not been completed. A cruel shadow of doubt hangs over hundreds of American families who have no knowledge of the whereabouts of their loved ones.

This Nation continues to explore every avenue of potential progress toward a resolution of this painful and frustrating situation. The recent Presidential visit to the People's Republic of China brought forth some hope for progress in this matter. The efforts of a Select Committee of the Congress to account for missing persons also have met with some success.

As we continue these efforts, it is essential for the Nation to be always mindful of the plight of the men whose circumstances are unknown and of the families whose sorrow we know only too well.

Further, it is important that all of us recall that the watchful eye of our Creator is upon us and upon those we love. We take comfort in the fact that each of us, in our own way, may call upon our God for guidance, for solace, and for strength to endure.

It is thus fitting for the entire country to join in one voice to declare our unalterable commitment to seek the fullest possible accounting for those lost in combat.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate Sunday, January 25, 1976, as a National Day of Prayer for Americans Missing in Action in Southeast Asia.

I call upon all Americans and all churches throughout the Nation to mark this day with prayers for these brave men and for their families.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth.

GERALD R. FORD